

REMARKS

Reexamination and reconsideration of claims 1-45, and consideration of new claims 45-48, are respectfully requested. Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the consideration of all the references on the Information Disclosure Statements.

Claims 1, 18, and 32 were rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims of U.S. Pat. No. 6,542,674 (the '674 patent).

It is respectfully submitted that the '674 patent does not teach, disclose, or otherwise suggest each and every feature of amended independent claims 1, 18, or 32. Additionally, the amendment of independent claims 1, 18, or 32 (or their respective dependent claims) is not an admission that the art of record teaches, discloses, or otherwise suggests any of the features of the claims. For at least this reason, the withdrawal of the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting rejection of claims 1, 18, and 32 is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claims 1-45 were rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims of the '674 patent in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,234,683 (the '683 patent).

The '683 patent requires that the fiber optic connectors 40,50 (i.e. connector assemblies; See Col 5, ll. 36-41 of the '683 patent) are inserted into first and second connector receiving ports 29,30 of a plug insert 20. See Figs. 1,4a, 4b, and 4c of the '683 patent. As illustrated in the '683 patent plug insert 20 is a single component having cantilevered spring latches 24,26 for securing connectors 40,50 in position. Specifically, the '683 patent states the following at Col. 6, ll. 3-29:

Fig. 4A is a perspective view of the plug insert 20. Plug insert 20 includes first and second connector receiving ports 29,30 for receiving fiber optic assemblies 40,50. The first and second connector receiving ports 29,30 include features that depress the cantilevered spring latches 44,54 of the fiber optic assemblies 40,50 and then upon further insertion, the spring latches 44,54 expand in the first and second connector receiving ports 29,30 so as to securely attach the fiber optic assemblies 40,50 to the plug insert 20. The first and second connector receiving ports 29,30 align the ferrules 42,52 of the fiber optic assemblies 40,50 with respective ferrule apertures 28,37. Associated with first ferrule receiving port or aperture 37 is a plug insert extension 23. The second ferrule aperture or port 28 has associated therewith a front seal seat 39(See FIG. 1). A ridge 31 is formed along a portion of a circumference of the plug insert 20. Diametrically opposed to each other are first and second cantilevered spring latches 24,26. The first cantilevered spring latch 24 includes a first nub feature 25 protruding outward. Located on either side of the first nub feature 25 are tool slide surfaces 35,36. The second cantilevered spring 26 is constructed in a similar manner having the nub feature 27 protruding outwards and having tool slide surfaces 33,34. Each of the first and second cantilevered spring latches 24,26 are mounted so as to be depressed inwards towards each other by at least a distance equal to the amount of each nub features' 25,27 outward protruding distance.

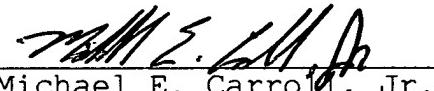
Thus, the purported modification fails to teach, disclose, or otherwise suggest each and every feature of independent claims 1, 18, or 32 (along with their respective dependent claims). For at least this reason, the withdrawal of the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting rejection of claims 1-45 is warranted and respectfully requested.

One-Hundred and Fifty dollars (\$150.00) is believed due in connection with this Reply for three (3) dependent claims in excess of twenty. If any other fees are due in connection with this Reply, please charge any fees, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 19-2167.

Allowance of all pending claims is believed to be warranted and is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is welcomed to telephone the undersigned to discuss the merits of this patent application.

Respectfully submitted,


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